



News Release

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Interchange construction at Aht'Wy Plaza delayed due to increasing costs

LEWISTON—After careful consideration, the Nez Perce Tribe (NPT) and the Idaho Transportation Department (ITD) delayed advertising the project to build a new interchange at the east entrance of Aht'Wy Plaza for construction.

"Our goal was to start construction on the interchange this spring, but prices on materials have compelled both parties to step back and consider how to move forward," ITD District Engineer Doral Hoff said.

Construction costs have increased with rising prices for essential materials like steel, concrete, asphalt and fuel. While the project will still make use of [\\$19 million in grant funding](#), costs have escalated since the grant was announced in September of 2020.

In response to price increases, the NPT has contributed an additional \$1.2 million to construction, but more recent estimates call for another \$5.5 million. To cover this increase, the project was submitted for additional federal funding with recipients announced later this summer.

Advertisement will be delayed until this summer, at which point the NPT and ITD will decide how to proceed. If the project is awarded more money, construction could begin late this summer.

"The Tribe and ITD are still committed to working together to see this project through, despite any funding challenges," NPT Transportation Manager Mary Beth Frank Clark said.

[Download renderings of the design of the interchange.](#)

This interchange project is not the only project to be delayed due to cost increases—last week the Idaho Transportation Board rejected the bid for the [project](#) to resurface eight miles of US-12 between Orofino and Greer. That project will not be advertised again until fall for construction next spring.

"Inflation and supply chain issues continue to make construction a challenging time for transportation departments across the nation," Hoff said. "At ITD we budget increases for every project every year due to inflation, but we were not expecting such severe circumstances."

ITD staff will continue to monitor guidance from national transportation economists and results from bid openings to avoid delaying additional projects. The department is also partnering with the Associated General Contractors of Idaho to limit the effects of inflation.

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The Idaho Transportation Department is responsible for all highways on the State Highway System – interstates, state highways and U.S. routes. All other roads are under the jurisdiction of the local, city or county entity.

